



# **Uttlesford Futures Governance Arrangements**

**May 2008**

## SECTION ONE

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Strategic Partnership for Uttlesford (Uttlesford Futures) is the umbrella partnership which works to improve the quality of life in the district. It is a strategic level body, which brings together representatives from key public and voluntary sector agencies, private sector bodies and community representatives, to identify and address issues through the Sustainable Community Strategy. As such it is the “partnership of partnerships” for the area.
- 1.2 The LSP is a non-statutory body, and does not have a separate legal identity. It brings together partners on the basis of shared common vision and purpose.

## SECTION TWO

### 2 Structure

- 2.1 *The Board* –agrees and maintains the detailed Sustainable Community Strategy, monitors performance and removes barriers to performance improvement. The Board is responsible for innovation and the future development of the partnership, and aims to ensure that the LSP becomes the over-arching body for setting strategic objectives, in Uttlesford, it interacts with regional bodies and negotiates on Uttlesford’s behalf in the Local Area Agreement process. Crucially, the Board consists of high-level representatives from partner organisations, with responsibility for influencing their respective agencies to align resources and strategic objectives with those of the LSP. The detail of the membership of the Board is set out in the Partnership Constitution (Section Three).
- 2.2 *The Management Team* –supplies a key support role for the Board, by translating high-level strategic priorities into local action plans, **driving** practical delivery of agreed actions, and addressing key local issues as they arise, including ensuring delivery of cross-cutting themes. This role includes managing effective performance management arrangements, and ensuring that partners’ plans and strategies are aligned with those of the LSP; that gaps, overlaps and linkages are identified; and that district and countrywide Sustainable Community Strategies are mutually supporting. It also ensures that appropriate consultation is arranged and managed, maintaining a robust evidence base. Membership consists of Lead Officers of each

statutory stakeholder, CVSU Chief Officer and officer representation from Working Groups, with further key officers co-opted when specific issues arise.

- 2.3 *Working Groups* – are drawn together to discuss and make proposals on specific issues, and **lead on** the development and delivery of agreed actions as part of the Partnership’s business/action planning cycle. Key Officer representatives provide specialist knowledge and expertise, ensuring that such actions meet current priorities and newly identified priorities as they arise. The performance management framework enables specialist network representatives to feed into and be kept informed of activity and achievements.
- 2.4 *Uttlesford Assembly* –represents the views of the whole LSP membership and Uttlesford residents, and provides a method of communicating with the wider community on partnership activities and for community issues to be fed through to the partnership. The Assembly acts as a conduit for local plans, partnerships and initiatives, and assesses progress on the Sustainable Community Strategy and its action plans. It identifies ways in which the Partnership’s policies, or implementation programme, should be amended to reflect changing circumstances.

### **SECTION THREE**

#### **3 Constitution**

- 3.1 The LSP for Uttlesford is not a legal entity. This Constitution for the partnership is not designed as a binding legal document, but as an operating framework to help members demonstrate their good faith and commitment to partnership working.

#### **Local Strategic Partnership for Uttlesford – Constitution**

This is the Constitution of the Local Strategic Partnership for Uttlesford adopted by the Full Partnership at its meeting on.....

##### **1 NAME**

The name of the Partnership shall be Uttlesford Futures

##### **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of Uttlesford Futures is:-

- To bring together key public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations in Uttlesford in order to improve the quality of life for all who live, work, invest and spend their leisure time in Uttlesford.

The objectives of Uttlesford Futures shall be:-

- To set the overall strategic vision for Uttlesford through the establishment, implementation and maintenance of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- To encourage local people (through consulting, informing and advising) to identify gaps in service, needs and priorities for their communities and thereby help inform the strategic vision of Uttlesford Futures and actively shape the development of agreed initiatives and projects.
- To promote the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information between communities, partners and sectors so as to develop knowledge and understanding of needs within Uttlesford.
- To deliver on common priorities, targets, agreed actions and milestones to show demonstrable improvements against measurable baselines.
- To bring about strategic alignments of those plans, partnerships and initiatives which affect the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- To promote the interests of Uttlesford beyond the District's boundaries with external organisations, County and regional agencies and Central Government.

### **3 POWERS**

Uttlesford Futures shall take all reasonable and proportional actions to achieve its aims and objectives.

### **4 MEMBERSHIP**

The Partners forming Uttlesford Futures (the "Partners") will represent key sectors and interests in Uttlesford, and reflect a balance between the Public, Private, Community and Voluntary Sectors.

The composition of the membership may be reviewed and amended at Partnership Assembly meetings.

### **5 PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARTNERSHIP**

## **Full Partnership Assembly and Board**

- Uttlesford Futures shall review the appropriateness and balance of its Membership, Structure and Processes at least once in every two calendar years.
- Except where the Constitution provides otherwise a decision of Uttlesford Futures should be reached by consensus. Should consensus not be possible a vote may be requested where each organisation would have one vote.
- Uttlesford Futures will permit the attendance at meetings of approved observers who are able to directly assist and support the aims and objectives of the Partnership.

The Partnership may from time to time review observer status and regulate it as it sees fit.

- Uttlesford Futures may from time to time invite representation from other organisations, who are not Partners, to attend and speak, without voting rights.

## **Board Only**

- The appointment/election process for members of the Board is as in the Board Terms of Reference in Section 4.
- Any Member of the Board may resign by giving not less than one month's notice in writing to the Secretariat.
- If a Member of the Board transfers to a different employer, removes to a different geographical area, loses an honorary position or paid post, their membership of the Board will automatically cease with immediate effect. The vacancy will be referred back to the appropriate selecting, electing or nominating sector to fill the vacancy as soon as is reasonably practicable, and the new Member elected shall hold Membership until the next review period.
- Should the Board consider the need to terminate the membership of a Member for good and sufficient cause, they may resolve, acting by a two-third majority of the members present and voting at a meeting of the board, to expel that Member from membership. The Member shall have the right to be heard by reference to the Partnership Assembly.

Any vacancy arising from termination will be referred back to the appropriate selecting, electing or nominating sector to fill the

vacancy as soon as is reasonably practicable and the new Member elected shall hold Membership until the new review period.

- Board members must commit to (where practicably possible) 75% of attendance at all meetings in each calendar year.

If Member attendance falls below 75% in any one year and/or any Members fails to attend for three consecutive meetings, then the Board has the powers to disqualify the said Member, taking into consideration the circumstances regarding failure to attend.

If any Member is so disqualified, the sector selecting, electing and nominating that Member shall appoint a new Member to the Board who shall hold Membership until the new review period.

- In recognition of genuine attendance issues Substitutes are allowed to attend in a Board Member's absence provided they are:-
  - a nominated substitute by each Board Member from a deputy level of status in their organisation
  - always the same person
  - able to attend meetings when the Board Member cannot
  - fully briefed on all issues to enable full participation in meetings
- No business shall be transacted at a meeting of the Board unless a quorum of Members is present. A quorum shall be one third of the Members of the Board. If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes of the scheduled starting time of the meeting it shall be adjourned to such a date, time and place as may be determined. Notice of the date, time and place of the resumed meeting shall be sent to Members as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- The Board may establish other working groups providing that all acts and proceedings of any such group shall be fully and promptly reported back to the Board. The composition, remit, powers and authority of any groups shall be determined by the Board at the meeting approving the establishment of the group Terms of Reference should be produced by the group for ratification by the Board and the Partnership Assembly at subsequent meetings.
- The Board shall have the power to co-opt two additional Members with full voting rights, to serve for one year or until the

next review date, whichever the sooner. Co-opted Members will be drawn from under represented sectors.

### **Management Team and Working Groups**

- Terms of Reference are included in Section Four.

## **6 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

An annual calendar of meetings will include:-

- Partnership Assembly – at least once per year
- Board – at least quarterly
- Management Team – at least quarterly prior to Board meetings, to monitor performance and report to/direct Board
- Working Groups – at least quarterly or as when required to ensure delivery of actions

Additional meetings may be arranged as appropriate.

## **7 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Any proposals to alter the Constitution must be agreed by a two-thirds majority of Members present and voting at a meeting of the Partnership Assembly. The notice of the meeting must set out the terms of the changes proposed.

## **8 DISSOLUTION**

If the Partnership decides it is necessary or advisable to dissolve itself it may do so by calling a meeting of the Partnership Assembly for which at least twenty one days notice shall be given. The Partnership shall be dissolved if the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the meeting.

Dissolution may also occur if direction and/or guidance to this effect is given by the Department of Communities & Local Government, or a successor body.

All parties agree that any funding received by them for the purposes of projects to be carried out as part of the aims and objectives of the LSP will be held on trust and used for the benefit of the project only, and for no other purpose whatsoever.

**Signed for and on behalf of Uttlesford Futures**

**Name:**

**(Chair)**

**Signature:**

**Date:**



## **SECTION 4**

### **4 Terms of Reference**

Terms of Reference may be subject to change as and when required. Any amendments made must be ratified by the Partnership Board and Assembly.

#### *4.1 Partnership Assembly*

##### **Purpose**

To provide the overall strategic direction for the LSP through a community-based mandate for the development and delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and its priorities.

##### **Specific Responsibilities**

- 1 To work collectively for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the people of Uttlesford.
- 2 To be responsible for determining the strategic priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy supported by Action Plans for Uttlesford, and to mandate the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy through the Board, Management Team and Working Groups.
- 3 To monitor, through receipt of reports from the Board and its Groups, the progress and achievements relating to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Action Plans, to provide appropriate challenge and identify ways in which the partnership policies or implementation programme should be amended to reflect changing circumstances.
- 4 To act as a conduit for local plans, partnerships and initiatives.
- 5 On a three year basis to review the Sustainable Community Strategy, contribute to ideas and assist in any revisions prepared on behalf of the Partnership by the Board.
- 6 To provide a forum through which mainstream public service providers can work effectively together to meet local needs, encouraging debate, respect and diversity of opinion.
- 7 To develop coherent, complementary policies and to provide leadership in representing the views of residents of the LSP area in all major issues of concern.
- 8 To review and ratify the Action Plans on an annual basis.

## **Membership**

All constituted organisations delivering a service in the District. This will also include Town & Parish Councils, Businesses, Voluntary and Community Groups, Youth, Older Persons and Community forums, and local residents.

## **Frequency of meetings**

To meet at least once annually.

## **Chair & Vice Chair**

Assembly meetings will not have a chair or operate as a standard committee.

Instead it will use a variety of participation methods to engage stakeholders and pool their talents, skills and experiences in setting the partnership's strategic direction and scrutinising its operation. Independent facilitators will be employed where necessary.

## **Accountability**

Reports directly to all Partnership stakeholders

### *4.2 Board*

## **Purpose**

To provide leadership to Uttlesford Futures and ensure successful development and delivery of the Partnership's vision and key strategies.

## **Specific Responsibilities**

- 1 To work collectively for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the people of Uttlesford.
- 2 To play a key part in the long term strategic direction and development of the Partnership and to take collective responsibility for approving and delivering its vision, policies, strategies and action plans.
- 3 To champion the Partnership within member organisations and sectors; to act as an advocate and to encourage organisations/sectors to play a full part in delivering its policies, strategies and targets
- 4 To act as a channel of communication between the Partnership and their member organisations/sectors at a senior policy level and to ensure that the perspective of each organisation/sector is effectively communicated and taken account of in the Partnership's strategic planning.

- 5 To be responsible for effective performance management arrangements, ensuring clear and transparent measurement of activity/achievement.
- 6 To check that individual partners and the Partnership are utilising their resources effectively and are achieving agreed objectives.
- 7 To take a lead on promoting equality, fairness and community cohesion, and to ensure that the Partnership reflects Uttlesford's diverse communities and addresses their needs.
- 8 To monitor and support the work of the Management Team and Working Groups.
- 9 To seek support, endorsement and where necessary, resources for the work of the Partnership.
- 10 To represent the Partnership in forums and conferences, and provide a voice for Uttlesford at County and sub regional partnership level.
- 11 To ensure the aims of formally constituted organisations who make application to become new members are compatible with those of the partnership.
- 12 To report and make recommendations on matters affecting Uttlesford and its community to partners, government and other relevant agencies within Essex and at national and European level.

### **Membership**

Senior officer representation from partner agencies as follows:

- UDC-cross-party representation (1 from each party)
- UDC-Chief Executive or Director
- ECC-elected member representing Uttlesford
- ECC-Area Co-ordinator
- PCT-Locality Director and Public Health Director
- Police-Partnership Superintendent
- Fire-Station Manager
- CVSU-Chair
- Business-Chair of Federation of Small Businesses and Chair of Chamber of Commerce
- LSC
- Sustainable Uttlesford (LA21)
- GO-East
- EERA
- Chair of Management Team

**Frequency of meetings**

At least 4 per year

**Chair & Vice Chair**

To be elected every year from Board members

**Accountability**

Reports directly to Partnership stakeholders through the Partnership Assembly

**4.3 Management Team****Purpose**

To provide a key support role to the Board by translating high-level strategic priorities into local actions plans, **driving** practical delivery of agreed actions and addressing key local issues as they arise, including cross cutting themes, managing performance and by identifying areas of concern and common interest

**Specific Responsibilities**

- 1 To ensure that different initiatives and services support each other and work together to add value to the delivery of priorities within the Sustainable Community Strategy
- 2 To consider partner contributions and identify areas where business planning processes could be aligned with those of the LSP at the same time ensuring that district and countrywide Sustainable Community Strategies are mutually supporting
- 3 To identify cross-cutting issues
- 4 To support the development and implementation of an integrated performance management framework for the Partnership and its partners
- 5 To identify projects/activities and to co-ordinate resources, including mainstreaming budgets and external funding sources
- 6 To engage partners in 'added value' projects and initiatives in order to promote existing aims and objectives
- 7 To develop cross agency proposals and bids for local, regional, national and international funding in consultation with the relevant Accountable Bodies.
- 8 To commission Working Groups to complete set projects

- 9 To co-ordinate the work and the reports of the Working Groups
- 10 To review action plans in the light of emerging challenges identified
- 11 To arrange and manage appropriate consultation and maintain a robust evidence base
- 12 To make recommendations to the Board about the use of the 'major partners' financial contributions & the commissioning of research into locality needs

**Membership**

Lead Officers representation from partner agencies, and the lead officers of Working Groups.

**Frequency of Meetings**

At least quarterly – two weeks prior to Board meetings

**Chair & Vice Chair**

To be elected every year from Management Team members

**Accountability**

Reports directly to the Board – all decisions pertaining to the Partnership will be ratified by the Board